

Winchester Area Access For All (WAAFA) Meeting

Held 17 October 2013 at 2:00pm

Volvo Room, WACA, The Colebrook Centre, Colebrook Street, Winchester, SO23 9LH

1. Present: Keith Hatter (Chair, Sight Loss), Margaret Gunn, Andy Cadle-Mills (Spinal Injuries Association), Peggy Jones (Winchester Live At Home Scheme), Dr Ian Barrett (WCC Equalities Advisor).

2. Apologies: Janet Chierchia (Win & District Mencap and Win & District Carers Forum), Sylvia Smallwood (University of Winchester, Disability Advisor), Kim Walsgrove (HCC Senior Access Officer), PC Craig Shears (North Walls Police Station), Penny Parkinson (Osborne School), Zanell Neethling (Minutes secretary).

3. Minutes: Of meeting held 18 September 2013 were agreed, with correction to section 8, paragraph 1 – should read “Left with something not as objective as when collecting data...”.

4. Matters Arising:

4.1 Bus Scooter Pass: These can be obtained from Tourist Information or the bus station, but KH reported these are not required for wheelchairs, only for mobility scooters. Regarding a recent bus experience of MG, there was a recent court case (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-24214346>) stating that the requirement was on the transport provider to require that things were moved if obscuring a wheelchair-accessible space.

4.2 Hockley Viaduct route: ACM had reported to the group that information was freely available at tourist information and staff were well trained in the location of the new route.

4.3 Buses: KH reported that the automated announcements had been implemented on some Blue Star buses, but these had been switched off because of the automated voice badly misreading some locations.

5. Treasurer's Report

JC (who apologised for her absence) had reported by email that WACA funds for us were in a healthy state. Current outgoings had only been for room hire and pay for ZN's time. KH had secured funding for a graphic designer to design the badge for the access awards scheme from the South East Network of Disabled People's Organisations (SENDPO).

6. Parking and Cycling on Pavements, Blocked Crossings

PC Craig Shears was not able to be at the meeting, but was requesting HCC to make changes to signage, traffic light timings, changes to speed humps and suchlike, in order to discourage misuse. He was also requesting improved enforcement of existing road signage. Local implementation of the national BikeAbility programme for school cyclists was now using the example of a blindfolded child being passed close by a cyclist as part of its course, to raise awareness of the impact inappropriate cycling can have, especially on

disabled people.

KH had put together a document containing details of CS's ongoing incident number (44130253756) and contact details. He had passed this to the Live At Home group, as well as to a the Welcome church in the High Street. ACM would also pass this on to some other church groups. It would also be worth passing this to local housing associations, maybe even to cycle shops like Halfords and Hargroves.

7. Walking Strategy Group

KH reported that the group aimed to encourage walking as opposed to motoring. They were trying to expand the pedestrian-only areas, KH urged them to consider the needs of blue badge users who may need to park closer to establishments. They were looking to define pedestrian routes rather than look at obstacles and crossings, and would do well to walk these routes.

8. WAAFA e-newsletter

ZN was not able to be present, but was understood to be currently setting this up, perhaps on a bi-monthly basis.

9. Access Awards (“Gold Badge”) update

The proposed badge design was considered to be good by ACM, MG, IB and KW. There would be Gold, Silver and Bronze awards.

The questionnaire was already in use by Osborne School, also by KH, ZN and (hopefully) by Winchester University, the Art School and Peter Symonds College.

A sheet of paper was handed out detailing the establishments to be surveyed and this led to some discussion. A number of these were marked as being covered by Osborne School.

KH would email the questionnaire to all members.

Not all of the questionnaire content could be covered objectively, so some would have to be subjective, especially that regarding the attitude and helpfulness of shop staff.

It is hoped that the surveying of shops would be complete by the November meeting, allowing then for assessment by Christmas. This could then lead to awards being given in early spring. IB would check whether the mayor might be available for this.

KH would check with the designer as to the copyright of the badge design and, if this is ok, would then pass the design to SENDPO for use by other organisations.

10. Communications with other organisations

KH said that a blind person had encountered difficulty with a bus service to Southampton when a parade was blocking the High Street. The staff at the bus station, it seems, were not as helpful as they could have been.

Andy Bundy (Havant group) reported that the marking on speed humps and alerting notices were inconsistent in the new Auger Row area. It was thought this may be a matter for KW to work on.

11. Any other business

ACM told about a recent trip he had taken from Winchester station, saying that whilst the lift construction was clearly in progress and expected to complete around the end of the year, there remained a number of issues with disabled parking and with space available for wheelchair users on the train. The staff were, however, very helpful at all times. ACM was writing a document giving more detail on the experience, which he would send to all and to suitable people in the Network Rail and/or South West Trains.

The meeting ended at 4pm.

Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 21 November at 2pm at the Colebrook Centre,
Colebrook Street, Winchester SO23 9LH (Volvo Room).